

Psoriatic arthritis: a case study

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Abstract - Psoriatic Arthritis requires a special mention as it may develop in up to 30 percent of people who have the chronic skin condition Psoriasis. Anyone who has psoriasis and joint pain may have psoriatic arthritis. Genetics, dietary, lifestyle related, environmental and behavioral/psychological factors play major role in pathogenesis. Vitiating of all three doshas is major contributing factor in the manifestation of the disease. Ayurveda advocates holistic approach of shodhana, internal drug administration (shamana) and external application in the treatment protocol. In this article, a patient treated with similar treatment protocol is presented as a case study.

Keywords: Ayurveda, Psoriatic arthritis, shodhana, shaman.

INTRODUCTION

The skin is the largest organ of our body. It is one of the five 'Gyanendriyas' described in Ayurvedic texts, which is responsible for 'Sparsha Gyan' or touch sensation. Most of the skin disorders have been described under the umbrella of Kushtha. Word Kushtha means a pathologic condition which despises the skin. Skin is an important organ of communication with the external world. Psoriatic arthritis is one of the most common complication of psoriasis which is dermatologic diseases affecting up to 2.5% of the world's population.

Psoriatic arthritis is a chronic disease characterized by a form of inflammation of the skin (psoriasis) and joints (inflammatory arthritis). Psoriasis often affects the tips of the elbows and knees, the scalp and ears, the navel, and around the genital areas. Approximately 10%-15% of patients who have psoriasis also develop an associated inflammation of their joints. Patients who have inflammatory

arthritis and psoriasis are diagnosed as having psoriatic arthritis.

As per Ayurveda, each patient of Psoriatic arthritis needs a different approach as the etiology and pathology are variable. Vata-Kapha/Rakta vitiation is the basic pathology and needs a holistic approach to treat.

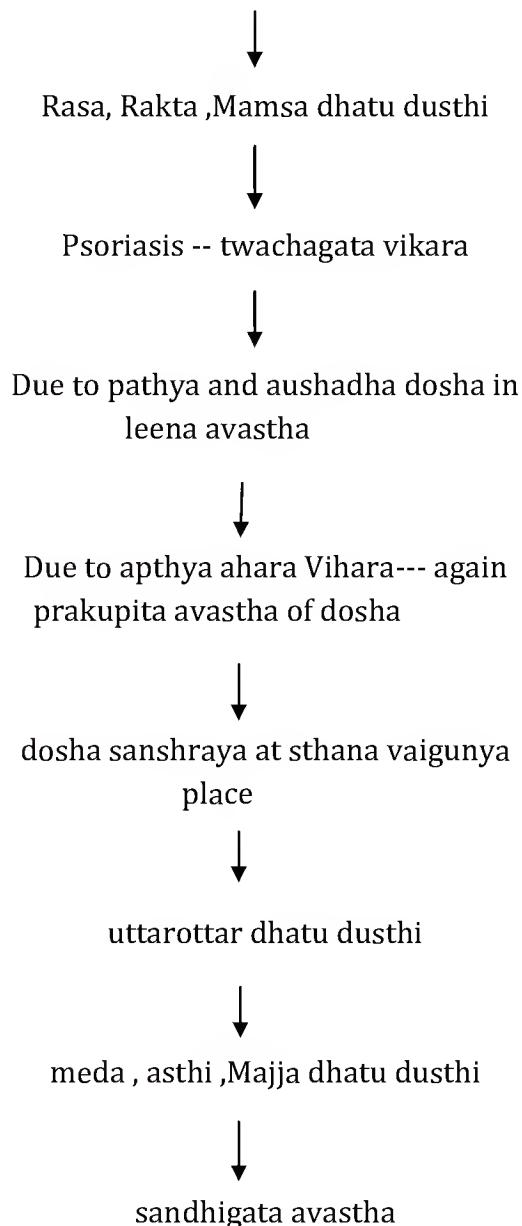
CASE STUDY

The patient, a 50 year old man, head of marketing department, presented at OPD of YMT Ayurvedic Medical College Kharghar with the complaints of reddish patches all over the body and head, scaling of skin, severe itching all over the body for 10 years. He was taking treatment from different Allopathic doctors since 3 years. The psoriasis was extensively spread throughout his body in last 10 years. He had considerable improvement but symptoms resurfaced while taking the treatment. He had started suffering from Psoriatic Arthritis. He was suffering from pain in both the knees and left shoulder since past 6 months for which he

was taking pain killers. He complained of mild stiffness in the affected joints.

SAMPRAPTI

Nidana like malavshambha, Manasik chinta, akala bhojan and nidra, apathyakar ahara(mamsahara, fermented products, viruddhahara) leads to vitiation of vata and kapha dosha



TREATMENT

All oral and topical medicines were stopped. Considering the condition as vitiation

of Vata and Kaph doshas and rakta dhatu are prevalent, and the Vata- Pittaj Prakruti of the patient, he was first given Virechana Karma as Koshta shuddhi[1]. He was given panchakol powder, 2 gm thrice a day for Aam Pachan and Agni deepana.

Then, he was given Abhyantar snehapaan with Mahatikta Ghrita. Abhyantar snehapaan was given till the Lakshanas of Samyak snehana appeared; in this case on 7th day. On eighth and ninth day Sarwanga Abhyanga with Dashmool taila and Sarwanga Swedana with Dshamool kwatha was done. On tenth day, he was advised not to take anything orally. Sarwanga Abhyanga and Sarwanga Swedana was done and for virechana, 100ml Kwatha of 25 gm Triphala churna, 15 gm Trivruta churna and 15 gm of Danti churna were given. Patient had pravara shuddhi with 22 vegas. Then he was advised samsarjana karma for next seven days.

After this the patient reported 45 % relief in the symptoms. After virechana he was given following medicines.

- i) Arogyavardhini vati: 250 mg, three times a day after meal with water.
- ii) Kaishor guggula: 250 mg three times a day after meal with water.
- iii) Mahamanjishtadi kwatha: 20 ml twice a day.
- iv) Aragawadha patra: local application mixing with takra.
- v) Pottali sweda : with shashtika shali

Along with the above medicines he was advised to avoid pickles, sauce, baked items, curd, cheese, oranges, lemon, non- vegetarian

diet; and was advised to take pathya aahar like moonga, masoora, parvala etc.

His complaints were improving gradually. Within 2 weeks of treatment patient reported 75 % relief in terms of symptoms like scaling and itching; and the patches vanished from most of the areas of the body, but there was slight discharge from the remaining patches. His pain in both the knees had reduced up to 50 %. His pain in left shoulder was as it was previously. His complaint of stiffness of the affected joints had mild improvement.

He was advised to continue the same treatment for further 2 weeks. On next visit he reported further improvement, the discharge was not there. His pain in both the knees had reduced more than 80%. His pain in left shoulder had 75% improvement. His stiffness of the joints had reduced considerably.

Two months after starting the treatment he had marked relief in the symptoms, but few small patches were still present over the scalp. After 3 months of starting the therapy virechana karma was again done. And this was subsequently repeated every 3 months.

The treatment was continued as such except that Mahamanjishtadi Kwatha was replaced with Sarivadyasava. On continuing this treatment along with repeated Virechana Karma every 3 months, now patient has improved completely, no relapse of symptoms have noticed in the patient after 1 year of therapy. The complexion of skin is very natural.

DISCUSSION

Psoriatic arthritis is a major problem among the society till today. In the modern medicines drugs like steroids, ointments and pain killers are used which give temporary

relief but not satisfactory and when the treatment is stopped the symptoms resurface.

After looking into the signs and symptoms, itching and reddish patches and joint pain were to be treated and that was achieved by mahatiktakaghruta[2]. Ingredients of Mahatiktak ghruta are kashaya and tiktarasa pradhana, which are pitta and kaphahara, vataraktahara and helps covering up lakshanas.

Arogyavardini rasa[3] helps in agnideepana and proper rasa dhatu formation. Katuki helps for elimination of dusta pitta and rakta.

Kaishora Guggulu[4] is good herbal combination which corrects the function of stomach and intestine and helps in improving digestion and removing toxins from the body.

It also has anti-bacterial, anti-inflammatory, anti-oxidant, anti-microbial property which helps in treating wounds. It is good blood purifier therefore, corrects Raktadushti (vitiation of blood) and Vatarakta.

Mahamanjistadi Kwatha[5] directly clears heat from the plasma and blood. When pitta overflows into the tissues it can irritate the skin and manjistadi clears these inflammatory toxins from the site of bhrajaka kapha. It clears heat by cleaning the liver, purifying the blood, increasing diuresis and promoting bowel movements. These actions combine to reduce itching, redness and swelling. Mahamanjistadi Kwatha is a Blood purifier, Immunomodulator and vataraktahara.

Aragvadha[6] is a very useful drug in skin disorders. It is included in both Kushthaghna and Kandughna Mahakashaya by Acharya Charaka(Cha. su. 3/17).

Pottali sweda is one of the types of swedana mentioned in ayurveda. Generally most of the patients suffering from psoriatic

arthritis have vata vitiation in dominance hence, snigdha swedana should be preferred like Shashtishali pottali sweda. The Shashtishali is known for its properties of being Twachya, Jantughna, Vranashodhaka and Vranaropana.

Sarivadyasava[7] is a rakta shodhak, rakta prasadak, used in twaka vikaras and acts as vataraktahar.

The holistic approach of Ayurvedic system of medicine provided purificatory procedure like Virechana procedure which removes the toxic waste materials from the body and also boost the immune system and provides both subjective and objective relief to the patient. In addition, if internal medication of some herbal compound is administered after taking the proper course of purification procedure like purgation, then it provides additional relief and thus helps in eradicating the diseases Psoriatic arthritis completely.

CONCLUSION

Psoriatic arthritis is a complication of long standing psoriasis which is triggered by some local and systemic factors. There is evidence that both hormonal and immunological mechanisms are involved at a cellular level.

Shodhana by Virechana and use of Kushthahara and Vranasravahara drugs followed by repeated Virechana worked well in relieving the patient. Thus, we can conclude that by adopting the holistic approach of Ayurveda, we can provide subjective and objective relief to the Psoriatic arthritis patients.

Though, a single case study may not be sufficient enough to prove significance of any treatment but it gives us an idea for the line of treatment to be adopted in such cases and helps to formulate a protocol for large sample studies.

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